

REMARKS

This responds to the Office Action dated February 26, 2007. Claim 1 is amended. No claims are canceled or added. Claim 2 was previously canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. As a result, claims 1 and 3-21 remain pending in this application. Applicant respectfully submits that the amendments to the claims are fully supported by the specification and no new matter has been added.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 5-19 and 21 were allowed. Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication of allowability.

§102 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1, 3, 4, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) for anticipation by Dinsdale (U.S. Patent No. 4,732,061). For at least the following reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 3, 4, and 20, as amended, are distinguishable over Dinsdale.

Applicant cannot find in Dinsdale each and every recitation of claim 1, 3, 4, and 20. For instance, with respect to claim 1, Applicant cannot find in Dinsdale a first camming linkage and a second camming linkage, wherein full extension of the first camming linkage and the second camming linkage results in a jaw spacing that is smaller than a diameter of a drill stem coupling portion and larger than a diameter of a middle of a drill stem section. Instead, Dinsdale discusses a “valve 212 serving to limit the maximum clamping pressure to the level preset by the operator.” (Dinsdale, col. 14, lines 57-59.) Therefore, for at least this reason, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of claim 1.

Additionally, dependent claims 3, 4, and 20 depend from independent claim 1 and accordingly incorporate the features of claim 1. These dependent claims are accordingly believed to be patentable for the reasons stated herein with respect to claim 1. For brevity, Applicant defers (but reserves the right to present) further remarks, such as concerning any dependent claims, which are believed separately patentable. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of these claims.

For at least these reasons, Applicant believes claims 1, 3, 4, and 20 to be patentable over Dinsdale. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Reservation of Rights

In the interest of clarity and brevity, Applicant may not have equally addressed every assertion made in the Office Action; however, this does not constitute any admission or acquiescence. Applicant reserves all rights not exercised in connection with this response, such as the right to challenge or rebut any tacit or explicit characterization of any reference or of any of the present claims, the right to challenge or rebut any asserted factual or legal basis of any of the rejections, the right to swear behind any cited reference such as provided under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131 or otherwise, or the right to assert co-ownership of any cited reference. Applicant does not admit that any of the cited references or any other references of record are relevant to the present claims, or that they constitute prior art. To the extent that any rejection or assertion is based upon the Examiner's personal knowledge, rather than any objective evidence of record as manifested by a cited prior art reference, Applicant timely objects to such reliance on Official Notice, and reserves all rights to request that the Examiner provide a reference or affidavit in support of such assertion, as required by MPEP § 2144.03. Applicant reserves all rights to pursue any canceled claims in a subsequent patent application claiming the benefit of priority of the present patent application, and to request rejoinder of any withdrawn claim, as required by MPEP § 821.04.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance, and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney at 612-359-3275 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

Respectfully submitted,

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By his Representatives,

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Date May 2, 2007

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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being filed using the USPTO's electronic filing system EFS-Web, and is addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on this 2 day of May 2007.

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